

# Bureau of Reclamation



Eluid Martinez, Commissioner  
Carrie C. Kemper, Bureau Editor



Above, Folsom Dam on the American River in Folsom, California, was spilling 115,000 cubic feet per second on January 1. Below, a mobile home park is flooded by San Joaquin River near Fresno, California. Photos by Mark Volkoff, Mid-Pacific Region. At left, Darla Taylor of New Plymouth, Idaho, rows out to her partially submerged property. This was the worst flooding in the area since 1964. Photo by David Walsh, Pacific Northwest Region

## Reclamation Engineers of the Year



Larry Armer—Great Plains Regional Engineer of the Year.

Every year, Reclamation uses a competition by the National Society of Professional Engineers to award two bureau engineers the top honor in their field.

For 1996, Reclamation's Regional Office Engineer of the Year is **Rick Gold** from the Upper Colorado Region. The 1996 Reclamation Service Center Engineer of

the Year is **Timothy Randle**. **Larry Armer** from the Great Plains Region, **Stephen Herbst** from the Mid-Pacific Region, and **Bruce Muller** from the Technical Service Center won in their respective regions. Congratulations to our exemplary engineers!

## Elephant Butte Field Division Joins Voluntary Protection Program

Mary Wagner, Elephant Butte Dam, New Mexico

The employees of the Elephant Butte Field Division at Elephant Butte Dam located near Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, have been given the opportunity to be the first Department of Interior member of the Voluntary Protection Program, an employee-driven safety program committed to reducing accidents and maintaining high standards of safety performance.

There are only 300 Program sites in the United States. All are private corporations; Elephant Butte Field Division is the first proposed federal site. The Program is managed by a committee of volunteers. At Elephant Butte Dam the committee members are **Eloy Valdez** and **Wes Able**, co-chairpersons, **Pat Finney**, recorder, **Bill Neeley**, collateral duty safety officer, **Mary Wagner**, **Al Bauer**, **Robert Olivas**, and **Allan Tow**.

The program is run with Office of Safety and Health Administration guidelines and OSHA representatives make a preliminary inspection of the work site to point out needed improvements. The Elephant Butte Field Division will be admitted to the Program when these safety improvements have been made.

Future goals include obtaining the program's three flags of excellence, which are awarded for each of the three safety achievement steps.



## Reclamation Dams Perform Well During Flooding in Western States

Reclamation dams performed well in handling flood flows from Northern California's devastating holiday flood. A key factor in the flood control operation was the full flood space available in the reservoirs at the start of the storm.

There were high flows in the rivers, bypasses, and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in January as flood space was recovered. The American River watershed received three times its average December rainfall in less than one week.

This was the fourth time since its completion that Folsom Dam has been instrumental in protecting the Sacramento area from floods. During this flood, without Folsom Dam, flows would have overtopped levees by ten feet. Peak reservoir inflows to the reservoir were 252,000 cubic feet per second. A normal seasonal flow averages 10,000 cubic feet per second. The major flood system of the Central Valley is working as it should, said **Lowell Ploss**, chief of Central Valley Operations for the Mid-Pacific Region.

Many Reclamation employees and customers were instrumental in keeping the citizens of Sacramento and other Northern California counties safe during the flood. In Sutter County, for example, Feather Water District Manager **Francis Silva** and his crew of more than 450 worked around the clock patrolling their 20 miles of levees. Silva himself worked nine straight days and nights with no sleep. There was one 24-hour period during which no food was available at the levee station because the surrounding areas of Marysville and Yuba City had been evacuated.

In the Pacific Northwest, the low elevation snowmelt and unseasonably warm weather contributed to flood flows in several river basins. Reclamation projects were operated to release minimum outflows during the peak and consequently contributed to reducing the magnitude of flooding. The subsequent cooler and drier weather should allow the opportunity to evacuate flood control space filled during this event. Snowpack in the Northwest is currently more than 200 percent of normal for this time of year.

## Yuma Office Wins Riparian Grant

Gary Ferrier, Yuma Area Office

Reclamation's Yuma Area Office has been awarded a \$583,000 grant from the State of Arizona to help restore riparian resources on the Arizona side of the Colorado River between Imperial Dam and Martinez Lake.

About 50 percent of the water surface in this area has been lost in recent years to silt and sediment accumulation, and invasion of non-native salt cedar. The grant will help fund development of small open water channels around portions of the riparian native tree community (cottonwood, willow, and

mesquite), protecting these plants from recurring wildfire. Work will also be done to redirect water to critical wetlands that have recently dried out, and reestablish water flow from the river through ten isolated backwater lakes that are at risk of becoming stagnant and sterile.

Reclamation has committed to match the grant funds and plans to start work as soon as the environmental compliance and review requirements are met and required permits are in place. The project is expected to be completed in March 1998.



Commissioner Martinez, middle, thanks the two employees, David Norenberg, Sr., left, and Matthew Lysakowski, who were responsible for averting a suicide attempt by a severely depressed and armed man at Hoover Dam in Nevada. Their bravery earned them a Valor Award. For their story, see page 4. Photo by Gertel Harris Brace, Commissioner's Office



# Reclamation Honors Wise Use of Western Water

Bureau of Reclamation **Commissioner Eluid Martinez** has announced the winners of Reclamation’s 1996 Water Conservation Award. Over the past 94 years, Reclamation has managed the water resources of the West and is making an effort to honor groups or individuals who are making a difference in preserving, conserving, and enhancing its use.

“Water is the West’s most precious and finite resource,” Martinez said. “The 14 winners of the 1996 awards program have proven that they are wise stewards of water, and I am pleased to recognize their efforts.” The winners (by category) are:

### Educational Mentor

**Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District (Colorado)**— A successful irrigation scheduling program with 48 cooperating farmers, a surge valve loan program, a water efficient turfgrass program, and a weather station network.

**Seniors Helping Seniors (Phoenix, Arizona)**— Uses volunteers to provide free water and energy conservation services to senior homeowners.

**Stockton Area Water Suppliers (California)**— Sally-Save-Water is an imaginative 1950’s character who visits schools with her water conservation message.

**Palisades High School (Palisade, Colorado)**— On-site pond and riparian outdoor classroom.

### EPA Honors San Angelo Center

*Kyle Hinkle, San Angelo Nature Center*

The San Angelo Nature Center, a Reclamation partner, has won an Environmental Excellence Award for developing community interest and partnerships to enable the preservation and enhancement of Spring Creek Wetlands.

The Center works with Reclamation in preserving Spring Creek Wetlands in San Angelo, Texas. The wetlands is on a 230-acre tract of overgrazed range land once used as a dairy ranch. The section of the property designated as wetlands came about as a result of a leak in the Twin Buttes Dam. Nearly 30 years of runoff created a habitat for wildlife that is usually not found in west Texas.

In understanding the value of the wetlands as a potential educational tool, tourist attraction and recreational area, Reclamation has contracted the Nature Center to develop and manage an interpretive trail system. The Center’s Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers have planned and are creating a seven-mile system of interconnecting trails, through and around the property. More than half of these trails are handicap accessible.

Interpretation is focused on the value of wildlife habitat protection, range improvement, and identifying the variety of animals, birds, plants, insects, and water creatures that are found there. Outdoor classrooms introduce this exciting new world to the school children of the area.

Planned family recreation outings provide naturalist-guided tours. Spring Creek Wetlands is another positive example of how a government agency, a city, and a private, non-profit organization can work together to achieve a common goal. The award presentation took place on September 27.



*At the Nature Center Museum, visitors are encouraged to touch the exhibits, such as taxidermic displays that include a raptor, a buffalo, and an armadillo. Photo courtesy of San Angelo Nature Center*



Commissioner Eluid Martinez

## The 1996 Water Conservation Awards

### Innovative Partnership

**Water Wiser (Denver)**—Innovative municipal and industrial water conservation clearinghouse, information service, and network, coordinated by American Water Works Association.

**Roza and Sunnyside Valley Irrigation Districts (Yakima, Washington)**—Two irrigation districts in partnership to resolve water management concerns and find ways to conserve water through a joint landowner committee.

### Long Term Leader

**Texas Water Development Board (Texas)**— Agricultural and urban water conservation. Leadership in promotion, education, technical and financial assistance for municipal, industrial and agricultural water conservation and reuse.

**Water Education Foundation (California)**— Education and information on water resource management and urban and agricultural water conservation for the past ten years.

### Promising Product

**Nu-Way Flume and Equipment Company (Delta, Colorado)**—Low cost, accurate irrigation canal water measurement.

**Joe Hobson, Sr. (Keizer, Oregon)**—Designed a water efficient mechanical straw mulcher that improves on-farm water efficiency.

### Small Demonstration

**Richard Wenstrom (Kinsley, Kansas)**— Comprehensive on-farm irrigation water management.

**Desert Demonstration Gardens (Las Vegas Valley Water District, Nevada)**—A public garden that presents water efficient landscaping to the public.

**Houston, Ramirez, Aubuchon, Depa. (General Services Administration, Kansas City, Missouri)**—Water efficient air conditioning technology for the Federal Records Center in Kansas City. This GSA region manages 15 million square feet of federal space in four states (Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri).

**Valley Improvement Association (Belen, New Mexico)**— Residential water-conserving demonstration garden.

Through the annual Leadership in Water Conservation Awards, Reclamation recognizes those striving to achieve water conservation through innovative, educational, or partnership efforts. The award is open to individuals, groups, private corporations, product manufacturers, local municipalities, regional governing bodies, and Federal Government agencies throughout the United States.

## Investments in Water Conservation Bring Big Returns in California Partnership

*Steven McQuinn, Lower Colorado Regional Water Conservation Center*

What is the public getting for water conservation investments shared by Reclamation and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California? A detailed report released last September by the District gives the \$9-million, three-year water conservation partnership a positive mid-course perspective.

The partnership between the Lower Colorado Region and the District began in August 1994, with Reclamation making \$3.65 million available to pay up to 40 percent of total project costs. The District supplies up to 50 percent, with recipient agencies contributing 10 percent or more.

The total budget will amount to \$9.12 million over the three-year span of the agreement which concludes in September 1997. Over this time, 83 projects will be initiated, all focused on water-saving practices that can be implemented throughout Southern California.

Water Conservation Center Director **Steve Jones** chairs the committee which selects the

appropriate programs and sets stringent criteria for program cost effectiveness, innovation and social benefit, with emphasis on low-income neighborhoods. The Bureau also retains oversight, review and accountability for the partnership, with the District providing administrative support.

“If Reclamation had undertaken these 83 separate efforts directly, we would have needed at least six more people on our staff,” Jones said. “The Bureau is getting a good ‘bang for its buck’ by leveraging local monies 40 cents on the dollar, for results that save water at less than half the cost of supplying it. Now that the concept is proven, local agencies have a powerful incentive to take the initiative without further federal priming or supervision.”

The most cost effective way to provide water is to conserve it. Through innovative programs and partnerships, the Lower Colorado Region has become a leader in making conservation opportunities possible throughout the Southwest. For more information, check out the Water Conservation Center’s web site at <http://www.lc.usbr.gov/~wtrconsv/partnership.htm>.



# Bureau of Land Management



Sylvia Baca, Interim Director  
Patrice Junius, Bureau Editor

Jim Hancock, left, the district manager at Prineville, and Steve Lent, right, the fire management officer, accept BLM's first-ever 1996 National Prescribed Fire award from Skip Scott, center, acting associate director for the National Interagency Fire Center. Photo by John Craig



## Prineville Honored With Fire Award

Chris Streb, Oregon

The BLM's Prineville District, encompassing 1.5 million acres in central Oregon, was recognized as a leader in the use of fire as a management tool to reduce wildfire risks, enhance wildlife habitat, and encourage native plant species. Since 1981, the District has used fire to treat 70,000 acres under its management, working cooperatively with private, state, and federal landowners in the implementation of its prescribed fire program.

**Jim Hancock**, the Prineville district manager, accepted the first-ever BLM National Prescribed Fire Award from **Skip Scott**, acting Associate Director of the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. The ceremony was held at a National Interagency Fire Conference in Portland, Oregon.

The Prineville District is working toward the reduction of wildfire risks to private property and natural resources. Wildfire threats to areas where urban development meets forests or grasslands (urban interface) are increasing in Oregon's drier central region.

Central Oregon's population has tripled in the last ten years, with more and more homes being built near federally managed forests and grasslands. Prineville District's fire program is working to reduce these risks by treating forest and rangelands with prescribed fire before they pose a risk to homes and property during severe fire seasons.

## Interior Fire Posters Win National Award

The National Association for Interpretation presented its first-place Media Award to Interior agencies, represented by the National Park Service and the BLM, for their work on the Fire's Role in Nature poster series. The award recognizes excellence in interpretative communications such as publications, exhibits, CD-ROM, and homepages.

The interest in interpreting the positive effects of wildland fire has increased significantly over the past several years, said **Pat Durland**, national fire management specialist for the BLM at the National Interagency Fire Center.

"These fire education posters and materials are some of the tools needed to help Interior agencies communicate the total message of wildland fire, its risks, and its rewards," said Durland.

The Fire's Role in Nature poster series was first introduced by the National Park Service, USDA Forest Service Northern Region, and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to educate the public about the effects of the 1988 Yellowstone fires.

Since then, other Interior agencies have recognized its value and applied its messages and products to public education campaigns throughout the nation. The series has been expanded to include posters and portfolios that depict fire's role in the northern Rocky Mountains and the southeastern pineland ecosystems.

The National Association for Interpretation is an organization of 2,600 agency interpreters, park rangers, teachers, curators, historians and others in the interpretive field. It's mission is to inspire leadership and excellence among individuals and professionals in the field of interpretation, and to advance interpretation as a profession.

The BLM and NPS have represented Interior by being a part of the Association's national workshop for the past three years, making Wildland Fire Educational presentations to participants and displaying wildland fire educational materials at the Association's exhibit hall during the workshop. The late-October award ceremony took place at Association's annual workshop in Billings, Montana.

### Surveying the B-W Parkway

Michele Willingham and Jason Racette, Eastern States

The Bureau of Land Management's Eastern States Cadastral Survey crew has been surveying 19 miles of a National Capital Area road known as the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.

Congress authorized the acquisition and construction of the B-W Parkway on August 3, 1950. It was originally designed as a limited access road for passenger vehicle traffic to and from Washington, D.C., and as a means of access between federal establishments and the seat of government in the District of Columbia.

The Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service was to develop, administer, and maintain it. To facilitate the land acquisition and construction, route plans were prepared by the Parkway's builders, the Bureau of Public Roads.

At the time of its construction, the Parkway's corridor was largely undeveloped and its boundary was sparsely delineated by markers. However, since its completion, commercial development along the Parkway has increased dramatically. Many of the original Parkway boundary monuments have been obliterated.

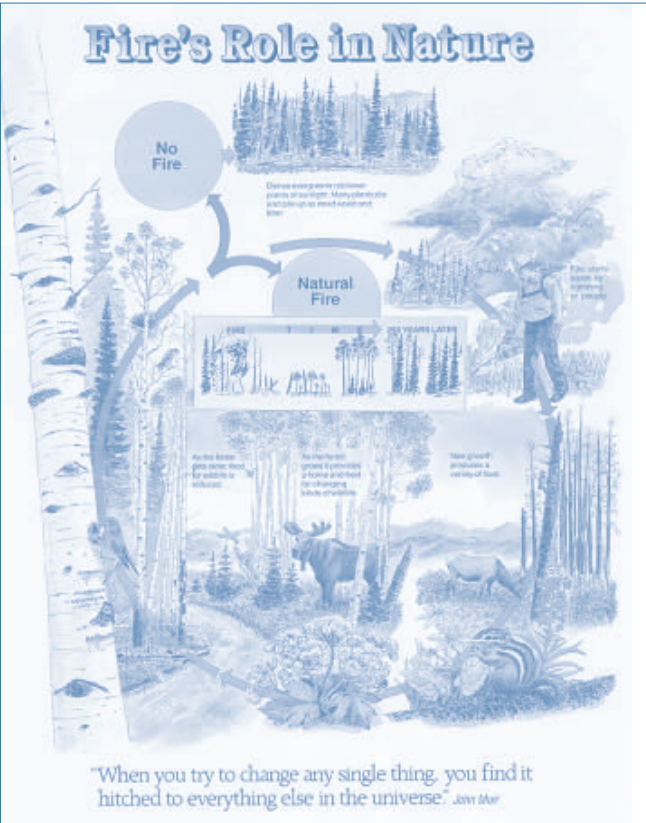
BLM's Eastern States Cadastral Survey crew, in cooperation with the National Park Service and the Federal Highway Administration, is reestablishing and replacing the markers so that developers and Park authorities will know with precision the Parkway's boundaries.

### Bald Eagles Attract A Crowd

More than 1,000 bald eagles migrated through Montana's Canyon Ferry area in 1996, stopping at Hauser Lake in the fall to feast on the kokanee salmon that die after spawning. And the Canyon Ferry Bald Eagle Viewing Program received more than 13,000 visitors who came to watch the annual event.

This popular program includes a hosted viewing area, school tours, and a visitor center with excellent exhibits on bald eagle ecology. Nine local, state, private, and federal cooperating organizations take turns hosting the viewing site on holidays and weekends.

The BLM serves as the lead agency under an interagency agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation. **Chuck Neal**, BLM Park Ranger, and **Walt Timmerman**, Seasonal Park Ranger, direct the program and, along with over 30 volunteers, enhance the eagle viewing experience for the visitors each fall.



### Encouraging Scientific Research

By Dwain McGarry, Wyoming

A working group from the Casper District Office has initiated a unique cooperative program that will promote BLM's extensive oil and gas data base for scientific research. The Wyoming Reservoir Management Group has established cooperative agreements with Colorado State University's Department of Earth Resources, the University of Wyoming's Institute for Energy Research, and the Colorado School of Mines Department of Geology and Geological Engineering to encourage graduate research using the BLM data. These agreements establish a continuing program to encourage interested graduate students to use the BLM Group's oil and gas data and analytical tools for geologic and related research.



Washington Office BLM employees donated 100 gifts to the Washington Metropolitan U.S. Marine Corps 1996 Toys for Tots Charity Drive. From left are Casaundra Seay, Terry Glover, Marcia Barber, First Staff Seargent Charles Rhodes, and former BLM Director Mike Dombeck. For story on Dombeck's resignation, see page 2.



## Revising Wilderness Rules

By Tom Gorey, Washington, D.C.

The BLM has published a proposed rule that would revise and update existing regulations relating to congressionally designated wilderness areas on BLM-managed land.

The proposal, which BLM wrote in plain English and appeared in the Federal Register on December 19, 1996, would revise or reorganize existing wilderness regulations in five categories: 1) definitions of certain terms, such as mechanical transport; 2) uses of wilderness areas; 3) prohibited acts and penalties; 4) special provisions affecting certain uses; and 5) access to private property that is completely surrounded by wilderness areas.

The rule would make it clear that sailboats and sailboards are considered mechanical transport that cannot be used in wilderness areas. It also would authorize the BLM to grant access to American Indians to use BLM-managed wilderness areas for traditional religious ceremonies. In addition, the proposed rule would clarify when it is appropriate to use certain devices, such as fixed anchors, for rock climbing in wilderness areas.

Overall, the proposal would bring the BLM's wilderness rules up to date with several legislative, policy, and technological changes that have occurred since 1985—the last time the agency issued wilderness regulations.



On behalf of BLM, Interim Director Sylvia Baca, at right, accepts the Good Stewardship Award from Dr. David Krause, at left, the president of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. The Society recognized the BLM's 50 years of valued stewardship of the nation's fossil resources. Baca was named interim director of the BLM when Acting Director Mike Dombeck became the chief of the U.S. Forest Service. Story, page 2.

## Chattin Helps Celebrate Native Americans



Tanna Chattin, BLM New Mexico's external affairs chief, explains the leather and bead work of her half-century old dance bag which she sometimes uses in powwow dancing. Photo by Kitty Mulkey

Theresa Herrera, New Mexico State Office

A soft drum beat provided the setting for BLM New Mexico's own **Tanna Chattin**, Chief, Office of External Affairs, to awe the audience with stories of her Native American heritage.

Dressed in her white leather dance dress, sea shell moccasin's, and bear claw necklace—Chattin described how she rose from a soft spoken child to a well-known television reporter with KIRO news in Seattle.

Tanna is most remembered in the Seattle, Washington area under her former name **Tanna Beebe**. She is of Cowlitz and Quinault tribal heritage from the State of Washington and was the first Native American woman in the top twenty major television markets in the early 1970s.

Chattin is also BLM New Mexico's first Native American woman to hold a key position and is the highest ranking Native American in BLM. Her heritage adds to the unique diverse culture of the New Mexico State Office.

## Ohio Land Office CD-ROMs Offer Wealth of Information

Bill Fulcer, Milwaukee District Office

At a recent meeting of the County Recorders Association in Dublin, Ohio, **Bill Fulcer**, Computer Specialist from the Eastern States, Milwaukee District Office, demonstrated the capabilities of the Ohio General Land Office CD-ROM.

The disk contains the index to 98,000 homesteads, cash entry patents, Virginia Military Warrants, and more federal land title information from the late 1700s to 1907. It is the first of two CD-ROMs issued by BLM, Eastern States in 1996. BLM provides each County Recorder's office with copies of the Ohio General Land Office CD-ROMs when the discs are issued.

In addition to staffing a BLM Exhibit and giving hands-on use of the CD, Fulcer also formally presented the General Land Office patent search and retrieval techniques to more than 100 conference attendees. As the Recorders became more aware of the wealth of data easily available on the disks, they grew more appreciative of the significance of the original land patents.

The Recorders were impressed with the amount of background and history also contained on the CD to help them provide better service to their constituents. They especially liked the graphics tied to the Ohio Land Surveys, along with the pamphlet prepared by the Ohio State Auditor which was scanned onto the disk.

There were many positive aspects to this Outreach opportunity with a potential to return to the Conference next fall for follow-up on the CD use and capabilities.

## Hot Dogs for Humanity

Jim Boylan, Eastern States Milwaukee District, Public Affairs Officer

BLM Eastern States' Milwaukee District conducted its first Holiday Hot Dog and Bake Sale on December 11-12. The event netted \$345 which was donated to Casa Maria, a local charity. Hungry lunch-seekers in the Reuss Federal Plaza devoured jumbo hot dogs, chips, soda, and pickles along with baked goods donated by BLMers.

"The entire effort was a team affair with everyone in the office contributing their time and whatever else they could," said **Terry Saarela**, one of the planners of the event. Its success resulted from meticulous planning, shared responsibility and a

willingness on the part of Milwaukee staffers to become their own best customers.

Casa Maria provides services including aid and shelter for homeless women and children, food pantries, and outlets for clothing, furniture, and household items in Milwaukee's central city. Casa's fine work and reputation led the Milwaukee District to support it through food and clothing drives in years past. The Hot Dog event is the District's attempt to increase its support. Employees hope to make the sale an annual event and outdo their initial effort.



Larry Johnson and Jim Boylan assist a couple of hungry patrons with dessert selections at the District's Hot Dog Sale. Photo by Sylvia Jordan



The Wyoming Outdoor Council, the Sierra Club, the Audubon Council of Wyoming, and the Wyoming Wildlife Federation sponsored public field trips to some of the most unique and interesting lands in Wyoming. Over the last several years, Green River Resource Area recreation planner Andy Tenney and Lander photographer Mike Mclure led overnight outings to the Red Desert and Adobe Town in southwest Wyoming.